

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 4, 2000

CONTACT: LISSA MUSCATINE
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202/456-2960

THE WHITE HOUSE REFLECTS THE HOLIDAYS

Washington, DC -- First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton today announced the 2000 White House holiday theme, "Holiday Reflections." To honor the past, the White House has been decorated with ornaments, wreaths, trees, mantelpieces and a gingerbread masterpiece that reflect the seven Christmas themes of the Clinton Administration -- Angels (1993), The Twelve Days of Christmas (1994), 'Twas the Night Before Christmas (1995), The Nutcracker (1996), Santa's Workshop (1997), Winter Wonderland (1998) and Holiday Treasures at the White House (1999).

The Administration began in the "Year of the American Craft". In 1993, Mrs. Clinton invited premier artisans to begin *The White House Collection of American Crafts*. During the 1993 holiday season, Mrs. Clinton asked craftsmen from across the country to create ornaments depicting the first theme "Angels". The season resulted in an incredible accumulation of one-of-a-kind ornaments designed specially for the White House. *The Year of the American Craft* resulted in thousands of artists -- from elementary school art students to professional artisans -- participating in Christmas at the White House.

The Ground Floor

The journey through the past begins as visitors enter The White House. The East Wing landing features an antique sleigh, laden with ornaments from each year. The needlepoint "kissing balls" that have graced the Grand Foyer over the years complete the sleigh. In the East Colonnade, an ornament representing each theme hangs in the middle of each wreath. In the Sculpture Garden, a magnificent glass sculpture by Seattle glass artist Dale Chihuly honors the new millennium. Designer Santa's suits, representing the 1997 theme "Santa's Workshop", adorn the Christmas Tree in the East Foyer. On the Ground Floor, the Vermeil Room represents the 1993 theme "Angels". Across the hall in the library, the Save America's Treasures tree honors the 1999 theme "Holiday Treasures at the White House". The Diplomatic Reception Room features needlepoint artisans throughout the seven years.

State Floor

East Room

The focal point of the East Room is the White House crèche made in Naples, Italy. In addition, grapevine angels from the 1997 "Santa's Workshop" theme rest on the mirrored mantels.

Green Room

The fanciful ballet scene over the mantel by ornament artist, Christopher Radko, spotlights the 1996 theme, "The Nutcracker".

Blue Room

The centerpiece of the Blue Room is the official White House Christmas Tree, an 18 ½ foot Douglas Fir, from the Shealer family's Christmas Tree farm in Auburn, Pennsylvania. The tradition of a thematic tree began in the early 1960s and is continued this year with ornaments from all seven themes. The green velvet tree skirt was handmade by individuals from each of the fifty states, territories and the District of Columbia in celebration of the Clinton family's first holiday season at the White House.

Red Room

The confectionery mantel, created by New York cake artist, Colette Peters, commemorates the mantelpieces she designed for the 1998 holiday theme, a "Winter Wonderland"

State Dining Room

The traditional gingerbread creation, located in the State Dining Room, is a replica of the White House highlighting the State Dining Room, Blue Room and East Room -- all decorated with themes of past holiday seasons. Miniature replicas of Chef Roland Mesnier's last seven gingerbread houses are seen in the miniature State Dining Room. The room also features the 1817 Monroe Plateau.

Grand Foyer and Cross Hall

The pier tables in the Cross Hall showcase art from the White House Collection of American Crafts. On the Grand Staircase ornaments on the pier table are showcased for the 1995 theme, "'Twas the Night Before Christmas". The pier table in the Grand Foyer reflects the 1994 theme, "The Twelve Days of Christmas". Eight cone-shaped trees by designer Robert Isabell grace the Grand Foyer. The kissing ball, painted and stitched by Hyla Hurley and Gail Hendrix, portrays each of the past holiday themes.

Past Years

Holiday Themes

1999

Holiday Treasures at the White House

Premier artists from across the country designed and created reproductions of colonial crafts to hang on the tree; Tinsmiths made colonial reproduction tin items; Doll makers made reproductions of important historical figures from our past.

In addition, individual projects from *Save America's Treasures* made models or representatives of their Treasure to hang on a special tree in the East Foyer or to be showcased on the State Floor on pier tables and mantels.

1998

Winter Wonderland

Snowmen were made by fabric artists who were recommended by the spouse of the Governor of each state; Knitted mittens and hats were made by members of The Knitting Guild of America; wooden ornaments were made by members of the Society of Decorative Painters.

1997

Santa's Workshop

Miniature Santa Suits were made by over 100 designers from the Council of Fashion Designers of America; glass balls were made by glass artisans; needlework toys were made by members of the National Needlework Association.

1996

The Nutcracker

Nutcracker ornaments were made by regional and professional Ballet Companies; wooden nutcrackers were made by Wood Craft artisans; needlepoint stockings were made by members of the American Needlepoint Guild and the Embroiders Guild of America

1995

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

Ornaments depicting the theme were made by members of the American Institute of Architects and architect students; needlepoint stockings depicting the theme, were made by members of the Embroiders Guild of America and the American Needlepoint Guild. In addition, the trees in the Grand Foyer were dressed with edible ornaments made by culinary schools from across the country.

1994

The Twelve Days of Christmas

Art and design students from Blue Ribbon Schools and the National Society of Tole and Decorative Painters made ornaments.

1993

Angels

7000 craft artists from around the nation created Angels in 5 different mediums.

Official White House Christmas Card Artist:

- 2000: Art taken from the original watercolor by Ray Ellis entitled "The White House, First Family's Residence, The Yellow Oval Room"
- 1999: Art taken from the original watercolor by Ray Ellis entitled "The White House, Our American Treasure, North Portico"
- 1998: Art taken from the original watercolor by Ray Ellis entitled "The White House, The State Dining Room"
- 1997: Art taken from the original painting by Kay Jackson entitled "White House Nocturne 1997, South Lawn"
- 1996: Art taken from the original painting by Thomas McKnight entitled "The White House, The Green Room"
- 1995: Art taken from the original painting by Thomas McKnight entitled "White House Blue Room"
- 1994: Art taken from the original painting by Thomas McKnight entitled "White House Christmas" of the Red Room
- 1993: Portrait of President and Mrs. Clinton by internationally renowned photographer Neal Slavin.

Blue Room Tree's origination:

- 2000: Douglas Fir from Pennsylvania
- 1999: Concolor Fir from Washington State
- 1998: Balsam Fir from Wisconsin
- 1997: Fraser Fir from North Carolina
- 1996: Colorado Blue Spruce from Ohio
- 1995: Fraser Fir from North Carolina
- 1994: Colorado Blue Spruce from Missouri
- 1993: Fraser Fir from North Carolina

Gingerbread House

- 2000: Gingerbread White House and its interior parlor rooms. Hints of the past 7 themes are found throughout.
- 1999: Confectionery tribute to treasures in and around our nation's capital – the White House, Jefferson Memorial, Washington Monument and Mount Vernon.
- 1998: Gingerbread castle with towers and bridges surrounded by a mountainous forest – with its setting in the middle of the State Dining Room table – in tribute to the theme, *Winter Wonderland*.
- 1997: The gingerbread house was in the form of Santa's Victorian house and workshop – complete with Santa and his sleigh preparing to take flight – in honor of the theme, *Santa's Workshop*.
- 1996: The gingerbread house was in honor of the ballet, *The Nutcracker* and was modeled after a Victorian-era house. Outside, two nutcrackers stand guard. Inside the parlors, the party scene from the ballet was recreated.
- 1995: The gingerbread house was a replica of the First Lady's girlhood home on Wisner Street in Park Ridge, Illinois.
- 1994: The gingerbread house was a replica of the President's boyhood home in Hope, Arkansas.
- 1993: A gingerbread White House was turned into the "House of Socks" with Socks the cat appearing in various disguises.

Stocking Stuffer Tidbits

Crèche

The beautiful antique crèche showcased in the East Room was a gift to the White House by Mrs. Charles W. Engelhard of Nantucket, Massachusetts in 1967 and has been displayed every year since its presentation. This beautiful crèche was made in Naples, Italy in the late 18th century. The original 47 baroque figures are carved of wood and terra cotta. To ensure that future generations enjoy this exquisite gift, a new setting inspired by the Neapolitan displays in the Baroque period was created in 1999.

Blue Room Tree Skirt

This skirt was made by representatives from each of the 50 states, occupied territories and possessions. An individual artisan designed and made by hand a piece of the green velvet skirt, which drapes the base of the tree. Symbolizing the state in which each artist lives, there are apple blossoms from Arkansas, buckeyes from Ohio and marine life from Florida, to name a few.

Kissing Balls in the Grand Foyer:

Each holiday season since 1995, master needlepoint artist, Hyla Hurley of Washington, D.C., has created a needlepoint kissing ball to hang in the Grand Foyer. This year's large kissing ball, by Hyla Hurley and Gail Hendrix, encompasses all seven past themes. The previous "kissing balls" can be seen on board Santa's sleigh in the East Entrance of the White House.

Oval Office

The Oval Office contains a tree decorated with ornaments made by 140 students from *Project Northstar*, an organization of young multi-racial community leaders who work with Washington's homeless and formerly homeless children in one-on-one tutoring sessions, designed to promote literacy and strengthen basic academic skills to children. Volunteers from the White House serve as tutors.

West Wing Lobby

Two Menorahs from 1997 and 1999 are highlighted in the West Wing Lobby. Displayed in the West Wing Lobby are the menorah presented by metal sculptor Mayrim Baram in 1997, and the historic Breed Street Shul menorah designed and crafted by Marlene Zimmerman in 1999. The menorahs will be lit each night of the eight-day celebration of Hanukah.

Monroe Plateau

One of the most significant pieces in the White House collection, on display in the State Dining Room, is a gilded bronze plateau purchased from France in 1817 by President Monroe. Although pieces of it have been proudly displayed on holiday tables ever since, this is the first time in 100 years that the plateau has been displayed in its entirety.

NOTE: Throughout the holiday season, over 2,000 individuals, ranging from elementary school students to senior citizens, will participate in musical programs at the White House. Please contact the Regional Press Office (202/456-7150) regarding coverage of the various groups who will be performing.

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White House Holiday Details – 2000

TASTY FACTS:

- ◆ The White House pastry chefs will use approximately 500 pounds of sugar, and 300 pounds of chocolate in their sweet creations throughout the holidays.
- ◆ The gingerbread creation contains over 150 pounds of gingerbread; over 25 pounds of marzipan; over 60 pounds of chocolate; and 15 pounds of sugar.
- ◆ Approximately 12,000 pieces of shrimp and 285 gallons of eggnog will be served at White House receptions during the holiday season.

— VOLUNTEERS:

- ◆ Eighty-one volunteers from across the nation donated their time and talents to decorate the White House this holiday season. For many of these volunteers, helping the White House prepare for Christmas has become an annual tradition. More than 600 volunteers will assist with tours and musical groups performing at the White House during the holiday season.

NUMBER OF CHRISTMAS TREES:

Inside the White House	34
Grounds	10
<u>Total</u>	<u>44</u>

LENGTHS OF GARLAND:

Garland on grounds and in the White House: 1120 feet

NUMBER OF WREATHS:

324 including 1 large 20' wreath

NUMBER OF LIGHTS:

50,000 (including Blue Room Tree)

NUMBER OF BOWS:

1,071

NUMBER OF POINSETTIAS:

220 plants

ENTERTAINERS:

- ◆ 2,000 musicians from all over the country performing in the White House during tours and receptions.

ORNAMENTS:

Ornaments were used from the past seven years.

◆ BLUE ROOM TREE:

Assorted Ornaments	900
Lights	11,250
State Balls (plus District of Columbia)	51
Glass Balls	550
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>12,751</u>

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White House Christmas
Card



THE YELLOW OVAL ROOM, FIRST FAMILY RESIDENCE
The White House 2000

THE WHITE HOUSE